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Iraq: U.S. Military Operations

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Iraq: U.S. Military Operations

Summary

Iraq's chemical, biological, and nuclear weapons programs, together with Iraqi long-range missile development and support for Al Qaeda terrorism, were the primary justifications put forward for military action. On March 17, 2003, President Bush issued an ultimatum demanding that Saddam Hussein and his sons depart from Iraq within 48 hours. On March 19, offensive operations began with air strikes against Iraqi leadership positions. By April 15, after 27 days of operations, coalition forces were in relative control of all major Iraqi cities and Iraqi political and military leadership had disintegrated. On May 1, 2003, President Bush declared an end to major combat operations. There was no use of chemical or biological (CB) weapons, and no CB or nuclear weapons stockpiles or production facilities have been found.

The major challenges to coalition forces are now quelling a persistent Iraqi resistance movement and training sufficient Iraqi forces to assume responsibility for the nations domestic security. Though initially denying that there was an organized resistance movement, DOD officials have now acknowledged there is regional/local organization, with apparently ample supplies of arms and funding. CENTCOM commander Gen. Abizaid, has characterized the Iraqi resistance as "a classical guerrilla-type campaign." DOD believes the resistance to comprise primarily former regime supporters and foreign fighters; however, others are concerned that growing resentment of coalition forces and resurgent Iraq nationalism, independent of connections with the earlier regime, are contributing to the resistance. According to DOD, as of January 16, 2006, 2,242 U.S. troops have died in Iraq operations, 1,761 owing to hostile fire. Of these hostile fire deaths, 1,397 have occurred since May 1, 2003. 16,420 U.S. personnel have been wounded or injured since military operations began. Non-U.S. Coalition fatalities have totaled 201, while Iraqi security force fatalities are estimated to be 3,977.

There are currently about 153,000 U.S. troops in Iraq, and an additional 20,000 military support personnel in the region. This may be reduced by 7,000-8,000 troops in early 2006. About 21,000 non-U.S. troops are also in theater, with Britain Italy, and South Korea being the largest contributors. Other nations contributing troops include Albania, Armenia, Australia, Azerbaijan, Bosnia-Herzegovina, the Czech Republic, Denmark, El Salvador, Estonia, Georgia (Gruzia), Japan, Kazakhstan, Latvia, Lithuania, Macedonia, Moldova, Mongolia, Portugal, Romania, Singapore, and Slovakia. Some nations, including the Netherlands, Poland, and have indicated they will further reduce or withdraw their forces during.2006.

Through primarily supplemental appropriations, Congress has provided approximately $251 billion for Iraq military operations through FY2005, and has approved an additional emergency FY2006 "bridge fund" appropriation of $50 billion for Iraq and Afghanistan operations, pending an FY2006 supplemental appropriation request.

This report will be updated as events warrant.

Contents

Iraq: U.S. Military Operations

Background

Iraq's chemical, biological, and nuclear weapons programs, together with Iraqi long-range missile development, and Iraqi support for the Al Qaeda terrorist group were the primary justifications put forward by the Bush Administration for military action. Since Iraq originally ended cooperation with U.N. inspectors in 1998, there was little information on the state of Iraq's weapons of mass destruction (WMD) arsenal; however, Administration officials were convinced that Iraq had reconstituted significant capabilities. Initially, leading Administration officials, most notably Vice-President Cheney, Defense Secretary Rumsfeld, and his Deputy Paul Wolfowitz, stressed "regime change" or the removal of Saddam Hussein from power. Later in 2002, WMD disarmament was emphasized as the primary objective. Expanding on this theme President Bush, in his speech before the United Nations on September 12, 2002, specified the following conditions for Iraq to meet to forestall military action against it:

- Immediately and unconditionally forswear, disclose, and remove or destroy all weapons of mass destruction, long-range missiles, and all related material.
- End all support for terrorism and act to suppress it.
- Cease persecution of its civilian population.
- Release or account for all Gulf War missing personnel.
- End all illicit trade outside the oil-for-food program and allow United Nations administration of its funds.[1]

On March 17, 2003, President Bush issued an ultimatum demanding that Saddam Hussein and his sons depart from Iraq within 48 hours. On March 19, offensive operations commenced with air strikes against Iraqi leadership positions.

Military Planning & Initial Combat Operations

As military operations continue in Iraq, there has been considerable discussion about whether the initial planning for the war was adequate and based upon accurate assumptions. Prior to the onset of offensive operations, the Department of Defense released only limited official information concerning war planning or preparations against Iraq. There were, however, frequent and significant news leaks which provided a range of details. News reports indicated that the military options that were under discussion varied significantly in their assumptions regarding Iraq

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[1] President Bush's Address to the U.N. General Assembly, Sept. 12, 2002.

military capabilities, the usefulness of Iraqi opposition groups, the attitude of regional governments, and the U.S. military resources that would be required.

Options Considered

In the wake of the successful operations in Afghanistan against the Taliban, some Administration officials advocated a similar operation, entailing use of special operations forces in cooperation with indigenous Iraqi opposition forces, coupled with an extensive air offensive to destroy Hussein's most reliable Republican Guard units, command & control centers, and WMD capabilities. This approach assumed that the regular Iraqi army would prove unreliable, and could even join opposition forces once it was clear that defeat was imminent. To encourage this, significant emphasis would be placed on an intensive psychological warfare or "psyops" campaign to undermine the morale of Iraqi soldiers and unit commanders, persuading them of the hopelessness of resistance.[2]

While having the advantage of not requiring large staging areas (though some regional air basing would be required) or months to prepare, this was generally considered the riskiest approach. The weakness of Iraqi opposition military forces and their competing political agendas placed their effectiveness in question, and predicting the behavior of regular Iraqi Army units under attack was problematic. This option also did not address the possibility of stiff resistance by Republican Guard units in the environs of Baghdad, nor the troop requirements of a post-conflict occupation.

This "lite" option stood in contrast to the operations plan originally offered by U.S. Central Command. This option, often called the "Franks Plan," after Army Gen. Tommy Franks, the U.S. Central Command (CENTCOM) commander who first briefed it to the President, called for a large-scale ground force invasion. News reports initially indicated, however, that this "heavy" approach did not receive the support of the DOD civilian leadership or White House advisors. Questions over the reliability of the regional support that would be necessary for staging areas and the length of time required for deployment were the major concerns.[3] However, the White House rejection of the "Franks Plan" came prior to the decision to take the Iraq issue to the United Nations Security Council. When it became clear that Security Council deliberations and the re-introduction of U.N. inspectors to Iraq could delay the possibility of military action for several months, it was apparently decided that this interlude would allow time both to negotiate regional cooperation and to deploy somewhat more substantial forces to the Persian Gulf region, and military operations appeared to adhere closer to CENTCOM's original recommendations. As the ground force offensive slowed, however, there was increasing criticism of DOD's civilian

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[2] "Timing, Tactics on Iraq War Disputed; Top Bush Officials Criticize Generals' Conventional Views," *Washington Post,* Aug. 1, 2002, p. 1

[3] "The Iraq Build-up, II," *National Journal,* Oct. 5, 2002, p. 2866.

leadership for not permitting the deployment of even more ground forces prior to onset of operations.[4]

Combat Operations Prior to May 1, 2003

Offensive operations combined an air offensive and simultaneous ground offensive, in contrast to the 1991 campaign which saw weeks of air attacks to soften Iraqi resistance. U.S. Central Command's operational plan employed a smaller ground force than the 1991 Desert Storm operation, reflecting an assessment that Iraqi armed forces were neither as numerous nor as capable as they were ten years earlier, and that U.S. forces were significantly more capable. This option depended upon the continued cooperation of regional nations for substantial staging areas/airbases and required months to deploy the necessary forces.

Though press reports differed somewhat, reportedly over 340,000 U.S. military personnel were in the Persian Gulf region (ashore and afloat). The 3rd Mechanized Infantry Division, the 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault), the 7th Cavalry Regiment, and the 1st Marine Expeditionary Force formed the bulk of the U.S. ground offensive. The 4th Mechanized Infantry Division arrived late in theater. Ships bearing its equipment remained off Turkey for weeks awaiting the outcome of negotiations to permit establishing a northern front attacking from Turkey, and then were diverted to the Persian Gulf when these negotiations fell through. The U.S. Navy deployed five of its twelve naval aircraft carrier battle groups. The Air Force had approximately 15 air wings operating in the region. Strategic bombers operated from the British airbase at Diego Garcia, and airbases in the Middle East, Europe, and the United States. The United Kingdom deployed over 47,000 personnel, including a naval task force, an armored task force, a Royal Marine brigade, a parachute brigade, a Special Air Service regiment, and a Special Boat Squadron. The majority of these British forces were engaged in southeastern Iraq, securing the Umm Qasr and Basra region. Australia deployed approximately 2,000 personnel, primarily special operations personnel, and one F/A-18 attack aircraft squadron. Poland had 200 special operations troops around Basra. (For more detailed information, see CRS Report RL31763, *Iraq: A Summary of U.S. Forces*, by Linwood B. Carter; and CRS Report RL31843, *Iraq: International Attitudes to Operation Iraqi Freedom and Reconstruction*, by Steven A. Hildreth, Jeremy Sharp, Melanie Caesar, Adam Frost, and Helene Machart.)

The invasion of Iraq was expected to begin with a 72-96 hour air offensive to paralyze the Iraqi command structure, and demoralize Iraqi resistance across the military-civilian spectrum. Intelligence reports indicating the possibility of striking Saddam Hussein and his immediate circle led to an acceleration of the operations plan, and an almost simultaneously onset of air and ground offensive operations. CENTCOM air commanders stressed that significant efforts would be made to minimize civilian casualties and damage to Iraqi physical infrastructure, and they were mostly successful in this effort.

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[4] "Rumsfeld's Role as War Strategist Under Scrutiny," *Reuters*, Mar. 30, 2003.

With twenty-five days of offensive operations, coalition forces had relative control of all major Iraqi cities, including Baghdad, Basra, Mosul, Kirkuk, and Tikrit. CENTCOM pursued a strategy of rapid advance, by-passing urban centers when possible, pausing only when encountering Iraqi resistance. CENTCOM spokesmen characterized Iraqi resistance as sporadic and uncohesive. Oilfields and port facilities throughout Iraq were secured, as were all major air bases in Iraq. Though a few oil wells were set afire, all were quelled, and there has been only sporadic environmental sabotage. Allied forces did not encounter the mass surrenders characteristic of the 1991 campaign, however DOD reported that over 6,000 Iraqis were taken prisoner, and believes that many more simply deserted their positions. Iraqi paramilitary forces, particularly the Saddam Fedayeen, engaged in guerrilla-style attacks from urban centers in the rear areas, but did not inflict significant damage. Nevertheless, greater attention than anticipated had to be paid to protecting extended supply lines, and securing these urban centers, particularly around an-Nasiriyah and Najaf, and in the British sector around Umm Qasr and Basra.

Though CENTCOM commanders expressed confidence in the adequacy of their force structure in theater, the Iraqi attacks in rear areas and the length of the supply lines to forward units led some to suggest that insufficient ground forces were in place to continue the offensive while securing rear areas and ensuring uninterrupted logistical support. These critics faulted DOD civilian leadership for overestimating the effectiveness of a precision air offensive and curtailing the deployment of more ground troops, suggesting that an ideological commitment to smaller ground forces and greater reliance on high-tech weaponry had dominated military planning.[5]

Without permission to use Turkish territory, CENTCOM was unable to carry out an early ground offensive in Northern Iraq. However, Special operations forces, the 173rd Airborne Brigade, and air-lifted U.S. armor, operating with Kurdish irregulars seized Mosul, Kirkuk, and Tikrit. Cooperation with Kurdish militias in the north has been excellent.

Post-May 2003 Operations

With the onset of widespread looting and the breakdown of public services (electricity, water) in the cities, coalition forces were confronted with the challenges of restoring public order and infrastructure even before combat operations ceased. Though U.S. forces have come under criticism for not having done more to provide security, the transition from combat to police roles is a difficult one, particularly when an important objective is winning popular support. Harsh reactions risk alienation of the population, yet inaction reduces confidence in the ability of coalition forces to maintain order. Coalition forces also have had to try to keep Iraqi factional violence from derailing stabilization efforts, with mixed success. There is a significant body of criticism that DOD's leadership's assumptions about the ease of

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[5] "Questions Raised About Invasion Force," *Washington Post*, Mar. 25, 2003, p. 17.

the post-war transition led to inadequate planning within the department and the disregard of extensive State Department planning efforts prior to the war.[6]

U.S. forces are spread relatively thin throughout Iraq, and many argue that additional troops in theater could improve the pace and breadth of stabilization operations. DOD initially rejected this argument, stating that rather than adding more U.S. troops, the increased number of Iraqi security forces could be counted on to assist more extensively in stability operations. Indeed, CENTCOM's intent was to reduce the U.S. contingent to 110,00 by the end of May 2004. However, in April, 2004, uprisings in central and southern Iraq led CENTCOM to alter its plan, and to raise the number of U.S. troops to 141,000 by delaying the scheduled return of some units and accelerating the deployment of others. This number rose to almost 160,000 in early 2005 in anticipation of insurgents' efforts to disrupt the January 2005 Iraqi elections, and then has fluctuated from 138,000 to again 160,000 in place for the December 2005 elections. After these elections, DOD announced its intent to reduce the U.S. troop level by 7,000-8,000 by not replacing units scheduled to rotate back to home bases. On December 23, 2005, Secretary Rumsfeld announced that President Bush had approved the withdrawal of an undisclosed number of U.S. troops in 2006.[7] A reduction to a "baseline" of 138,000 by Spring 2006, and further reductions in Summer 2006 have also been discussed. Though some have speculated that domestic concerns over the 2006 U.S. elections may encourage the Bush Administration to speed withdrawals, DOD military and civilian officials remain adamant that the security situation in Iraq and the adequacy of Iraqi Security Forces (ISF) will be the dominant factor in determining U.S. withdrawals.

Since the late Fall 2004, U.S. forces, with ISF participation, have undertaken fairly constant counterinsurgency operations, focused primarily on strongholds in central and western Iraq. Though uniformly successful in defeating or driving out insurgents, U.S. forces were insufficient to permanently garrison these areas to prevent the insurgents return, thus requiring repeated assaults in some areas. Beginning in late 2005, efforts were increased to establish Iraqi Security Force garrisons in cleared areas. The success of this approach will depend upon the reliability of the ISF, and the ability of the Iraqi government at the national and local levels to sustain them.

The attitude of the Iraq population remains the key element to stabilizing Iraq, and depends upon a variety of factors, such as the nature and extent of infrastructure damage and economic dislocation, the demands of ethnic and religious groups, and the speed with which a credible government can be established. Though a short-term post-war occupation was initially expected by some Administration officials, it is now believed that a continued deployment of substantial military ground forces could be necessary for several years, assuming that the new Iraqi government does not request the removal of coalition forces. For comparison, in the relatively benign environment and considerably smaller areas of Bosnia and Kosovo, after nine years

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[6] Cordesman, Anthony, "An Effective U.S. Strategy for Iraq," testimony before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, February 1, 2005; Diamond, Larry. "What Went Wrong in Iraq," *Foreign Affairs*, Sept./Oct. 2004.

[7] "Iraq Contingent May Grow if Attacks Persist", *Los Angeles Times*, December 26, 2005.

of peacekeeping operations, NATO still maintains a deployment of about 7,000 troops.

Iraqi Security Organizations

The Bush Administration has made the ability of the ISF to defeat the insurgency and maintain order the pivotal element of continued U.S. military presence in Iraq. Though early ISF performance was poor, with many personnel deserting and some actively joining the insurgents, Administration officials believe that a strengthened training effort has provided more reliable units. The Multi-National Security Transition Command- Iraq [http://www.mnstci.iraq.centcom.mil/] has responsibility for this training effort. Participants include U.S., Australian, and NATO trainers.[8] Though initial efforts were hampered by delays in staffing U.S. personnel, lack of equipment, and difficulties in retaining Iraqi personnel, training efforts are now moving apace. There are still, however, some concerns that Iraqi security forces remain under-equipped, lacking sufficient vehicles, heavy weapons, and communications equipment.[9] There are also reports that the security forces have been significantly infiltrated by insurgent informants.[10] Independent estimates of the time required to develop a full complement of fully capable security forces range up to five years.[11]

Iraqi security forces total about 226,900 trained/equipped personnel, with an estimated 272,000 required. As of January 18, 2006, the State Department's *Iraq Weekly Status Report* [http://www.state.gov/p/nea/rls/rpt/iraqstatus/2005/] provided the following statistics.

Iraqi Security Forces (operational)	
Police	82,100
Other Ministry of Interior Forces	38,000
Army	105,500
Air Force	500
Coastal Defense Force	800
Total	**266,900**

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[8] For additional information, se CRS Report RS22093, *Iraq's New Security Forces: The Challenge of Sectarian and Ethnic Influences.*

[9] Eric Schmitt, "Effort To Train New Iraqi Army Is Facing Delays," *New York Times*, Sep. 20, 2004. p. 1.

[10] Richard Oppel, "Friend Or Enemy? The Iraqi Uniforms Don't Always Tell", *New York Times,* Nov. 15, 2004. John Lumpkin, "Insurgents Said To Be Infiltrating Security Forces," *Associated Press*, Oct. 22, 2004.

[11] Barry Renfrew, "Report Says Iraqi Forces May Take 5 Years To Build," *Associated Press*, Oct. 20, 2004.

Iraqi Resistance

Coalition troops, Iraqi security forces, and civilian support personnel continue to come under frequent and deadly attacks, primarily in central Iraq, but sporadically in southern and northern Iraq also. This constant potential for attack affects the pace and mode of reconstruction and stabilization operations. Troops must assume a potentially hostile environment, yet try to avoid incidents or actions that erode popular support. In addition to continuing attacks on coalition personnel, there have been attacks on infrastructure targets (e.g., oil/gas pipelines, electrical power stations and lines) hindering efforts to restore basic services to the civilian population. Attacks on oil pipelines also threaten to further delay the use of Iraqi oil exports to fund reconstruction programs. Though it is virtually impossible to fully protect these pipelines from sabotage, it is hoped that ongoing efforts to train specialized Iraqi units will provide coalition troops some assistance in this mission.

Though initially denying that these attacks were the work of an organized resistance movement, DOD officials have now acknowledged there is at least regional/local organization, with apparently ample supplies of arms and funding. CENTCOM commander Gen. Abizaid, has characterized the Iraqi resistance as " a classical guerrilla-type campaign.[12] Though many attacks have been made with improvised explosives, the resistance also has access to mortars, rocket launchers, and surface-to-air missiles looted from Iraq army depots. For example, one of the President's quarterly reports to Congress on Iraq operations noted that only 40% of Iraq's pre-war munitions inventory was secured or destroyed prior to April 2004.[13] The resistance has also moved from solely guerrilla-style attacks to utilizing suicide bombers. DOD believes the resistance to comprise primarily former regime supporters such Baathist party members, Republican Guard soldiers, and paramilitary personnel. However, others are concerned that growing resentment of coalition forces and resurgent Iraq nationalism, independent of connections with the earlier regime, are contributing to the resistance.[14] Estimates of the size of the insurgency have ranged as high as 20,000.[15] There is, however, no reliable methodology for determining actual numbers for an insurgency that operates for the most part clandestinely. It is generally assumed that the insurgency has a core of combatants, with a significantly larger pool of active and passive supporters, predominantly among the Sunni Muslim population. Captured documents have given some indication that preparations for a resistance movement were made prior to the war, including the caching of arms and money.

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[12] DOD News Briefing, July 16, 2003.

[13] *A Report Consistent with the Authorization for the Use of Force Against Iraq*, 108th Congress, 2nd Session. Document No. 108-180, Apr. 21, 2004.

[14] "Iraqis Skeptical Over U.S. Explanation for Continuing Attacks on Coalition," *London Financial Times*, Aug. 4, 2003, p. 5.

[15] *Iraq Index*, Brookings Institution, January 2006. p. 17

Equipment Issues

Some equipment issues have attracted considerable public and congressional attention: the availability of "up-armored" High-Mobility Multi-Wheeled Vehicles (HMMWVs or Humvees), armor for transport trucks, and the availability of the most modern body armor for individual soldiers. With most heavy armored vehicles being withdrawn after major combat operations ceased, the HMMWVs are the primary vehicles for patrols and transportation. While they can fitted with a variety of weapon systems for defense, the standard HMMWVs offer little protection against the roadside bombs and rocket-propelled grenades favored by the Iraqi resistance. This created an unanticipated demand for the "up-armored" version. There were relatively few of these in theater, and indeed relatively few (2%) in the Army HMMWV inventory. In response, the Army transferred available "up-armored" vehicles from other theaters, and ordered ramped-up production from the vehicle's one manufacturer. Funding for this effort has come from re-programming and from DOD emergency supplemental appropriations. In March 2005, the Army established a requirement for 9,702 "up-armored" HMMWVs in Iraq (up from the May 2003 requirement of 235 vehicles) which was fulfilled as of September 2005. In addition, 13,872 add-on armor kits have been added to conventional HMMWVs and other vehicles in theater. The Army is also moving to armor all its operational transport vehicle. This is being accomplished though both add-on armor kits and factory-built truck cabs. By spring 2005, CENTCOM maintained that all U.S. military vehicles in Iraq have some armor protection[16] In the FY2005 emergency supplemental appropriation (P.L. 109-13), Congress added $150 million to the Army's request for up-armored HMMWVs, for a total of $618 million for Army and Marine Corps HMMWVs. This supplemental appropriation also included $611 million for add-on armor kits, $48 million more than DOD requested. For FY2006, Congress appropriated an additional $240 million for up-armored HMMWVs, and $150 million for add-on armor for light and medium transport vehicles.

The issue of modern body armor also arose in the period after major combat operations ceased. Initially, only dismounted, frontline combat troops were issued the most modern body armor which can be upgraded with Small Arms Protective Inserts, or so-called SAPI plates, which can stop most small-arms bullets and shrapnel. Combat support personnel, tank crews, and most National Guard and Reserve troops were issued older Vietnam-era "flak jackets" with less protective capability. As it became clear that the security environment in Iraq made almost all personnel vulnerable to attack, the demand for the SAPI plate armor increased dramatically. Press reports of soldiers' families purchasing the armor to ship to Iraq, and reports that National Guard units were being sent to Iraq with equipment inferior to that of regular Army units exacerbated both public and congressional concern. Again, the Army responded with orders for ramped-up production funded through reprogramming ($310 million) from DOD's Iraqi Freedom Fund and $40 million in the FY2005 DOD appropriations request. According to Army Chief of Staff Schoomaker, as of November 2005 all personnel deployed to Iraq were equipped

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[16] House Armed Services Committee Hearing, Nov. 17, 2004.

with up-to-date body armor.[17] In January 2006, however, a report by a DOD medical examiner was made public that noted that additional torso side armor could have prevented a number of combat deaths. In response to this report, both the Army and Marine Corps have begun procurement of additional body armor.[18]

Force Level Debate

The question of how many military personnel are required for stabilization operations has been a subject of controversy since well before the onset of operations. This controversy reflects the great difficulty in predicting how the political and military situation in post-war Iraq will evolve, and how long a military presence will be required before an acceptable and stable Iraqi government can be established. The continued Iraqi armed resistance has reinvigorated the debate over whether the United States has committed sufficient troops to the Iraqi operation. There are currently approximately 160,000 U.S. troops in Iraq (For detailed coverage of U.S. forces currently deployed, see CRS Report RL31763, *Iraq: Summary of U.S. Forces*, by Linwood B. Carter.)

The rapid success of the combat offensive initially quieted critics who argued that a substantially larger ground force should have been deployed, but the question is now being raised whether a more robust military presence in Iraq is needed to bring stability. Secretary Rumsfeld and out-going CENTCOM commander Gen. Franks both maintained in congressional testimony that the number of troops in Iraq was adequate for the mission, though the new insurgencies has changed this view.

DOD prepared a rotation plan for Army duty tours in Iraq, which called for units to spend a one-year tour of duty in the region, however new operational requirements prevented holding to this plan and some units will have spent more than one year in Iraq by the time they return to home bases and can expect multiple deployments to Iraq or Afghanistan. The Army has examined the possibility of instituting seven-month tours similar to the rotations maintained by the U.S. Marine Corps, but the Army's larger force presence in Iraq makes it unlikely that shorter tours can be accomplished.[19]

Though senior DOD civilian and military officials have maintained that troop levels have been adequate, and are determined by ground commanders' recommendations, there has been continued controversy over whether there are adequate forces to conduct an effective counterinsurgency campaign. The controversy over additional troops in Iraq has rekindled the debate over whether the U.S. Army personnel end-strength should be increased. Currently, the congressionally mandated end-strength is 502,400, with the Secretary of Defense having authorization to increase this to 532,400 over the next three fiscal years. In reporting the FY2005 Defense Authorization Act, the House Armed Services Committee noted the "inadequacy of military manpower, especially active component end-strength, as

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[17] House Armed Services Committee Hearing, Nov. 17, 2004

[18] "Army Sending Added Armor to Iraq Units", *New York Times*, January 12, 2006.

[19] House Armed Services Committee Hearing, Nov. 17, 2004.

indicated in the need to activate 33,000 reservists annually." The report further noted that the Army had estimated its manpower shortfall to be between 41,000 to 123,000 personnel. DOD's civilian leadership is attempting to address these shortfalls in specific functions by moving personnel from lower priority assignments and by increasing the use of civilians in some functional areas to free up active duty military personnel. The Congress has approved a temporary increase of 30,000 to the Army's end-strength which is being funded through supplemental appropriations. Army Chief of Staff Gen. Schoomaker has voiced concern that adding to the Army's permanent end-strength would create financial burdens on the service that would reduce the funds available for equipment modernization.[20] (For additional information, see CRS Report RS21754, *Military Forces: What is the Appropriate Size for the United States Army?*, by Edward F. Bruner.)

Non-U.S. Forces

A key element in the Defense Department's consideration of troop requirements in Iraq is the willingness of other nations to contribute ground forces. DOD has reported that about 23,000 non-U.S. troops from 27 other nations are in Iraq, but has not released a nation-by-nation breakdown of these contributions. Press reports indicate that Britain, Poland, South Korea, Italy, and the Ukraine are the largest contributors. Most nations, however, have deployed relatively small numbers of troops, and questions remain about their operational capabilities.[21] Some nations that the United States has approached for assistance (e.g., Turkey, Pakistan, India) have indicated that their participation would be dependent upon, at a minimum, a United Nations resolution authorizing operations in Iraq. However, after the United Nations Security Council passed such a resolution, there still was no enthusiasm for contributing military forces. For these nations, significant domestic political resistance to participation in Iraq operations remains a consideration. Reflecting this, 2005 national elections in Spain resulted in a new government that withdrew the Spanish contingent from Iraq immediately. The contingents from Honduras and the Dominican Republic, which were dependent upon Spanish forces for command and logistic support, also withdrew.

Though many NATO nations have unilaterally contributed troops, the Bush Administration's efforts to obtain an institutional NATO commitment to providing combat troops have proven unsuccessful. However, in January 2006, NATO announced that all member nations are contributing to the training of Iraqi security forces. The nature of the contributions vary by nation from the purely monetary to training missions on-site in Iraq. NATO officials have noted that the on-going operations in Afghanistan, where it commands the International Security Assistance Force, remain its primary focus.

Unlike stabilization operations in Bosnia and Kosovo, where contributing nations assume the cost of their troop deployments, in Iraq the United States is assuming much of the cost for non-U.S. force deployments. The Administration has

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[20] "Congress, DOD Likely to Clash over Size of Army Force Structure", *Inside Defense*, January 9, 2006.

[21] "G.I.'s Doubt Foreign Troops Readiness," *Chicago Tribune*, Sept. 7, 2003, p. 1.

not released a break-out of funding specifically for non-U.S. forces in Iraq. The following estimates non-U.S. troop contributions are from the CRS Report RL32105, *Post-War Iraq: A Table and Chronology of Foreign Contributions*, by Jeremy M. Sharp and Christopher M. Blanchard, and are based upon press reports and foreign embassy statements. An asterisk (*) indicates countries that are withdrawing or reportedly considering withdrawing all or a portion of their forces from Iraq this year.

Table 1. Countries Contributing Personnel to Iraq Operations

Country	Number of personnel
Albania	70+
Armenia	N/A
Australia	850+
Azerbaijan	150+
Bosnia-Herzegovina	N/A
Czech Republic	113
Denmark	520
El Salvador	380
Estonia	43
Georgia (Gruzia)	850
Italy*	2,900
Japan*	600
Kazakhstan	27
Latvia	150
Lithuania	105
Macedonia	28
Moldova	N/A
Mongolia	140
Netherlands*	N/A
Norway	10
Poland*	900
Portugal	110
Romania	734
Singapore	N/A
Slovakia	105
South Korea*	2,200
United Kingdom	8,000

Costs

Predicting the cost of military operations is a task that DOD did not undertake prior to the peace-keeping deployments to the Balkans in the 1990s, and it remains a somewhat conjectural exercise. Learning from the attempts to estimate costs for military operations in the Balkans and elsewhere, DOD developed a computer model based upon previous actual costs (Contingency Operations Support Tool). Though initially Secretary Rumsfeld expressed his opinion that "it is unknowable what a war or conflict like that would cost," in early 2003 he estimated a cost of under $50 billion. Other DOD officials anticipated an $80-$85 billion cost, assuming a six-month follow-on occupation.[22]

On March 25, 2003, the Administration submitted a $74.7 billion FY2003 supplemental appropriations request, of which $62.6 billion was for Department of Defense expenses related to the war in Iraq through September 2003. Specifically, this request included funds for preparatory costs incurred, costs associated with military operations, replenishing munitions, and funds to support other nations. The Administration stated that this supplemental request was "built on the key assumption that U.S. military action in Iraq will be swift and decisive."[23] Both the House and Senate approved the legislative conference report to H.R. 1559 (H.Rept. 108-76), which provided $62.37 billion.

On September 17, 2003, President Bush submitted an $87 billion emergency FY2004 supplemental budget request, of which $51.8 billion was for military operations in Iraq (Operations and Maintenance- $32.3; Personnel $18.5). On October 30 2004, Congress approved an appropriation of $87.4 billion, a $400 million increase over the President's request. Congress has also approved an FY2005 emergency "bridge"supplemental appropriation of $25 billion as a part of the FY2004 DOD Appropriation Act. In February 2005, the Administration submitted a $74.9 FY2005 emergency supplemental appropriation request for operations in Iraq and Afghanistan, and Congress responded by approving a supplemental appropriation of $75.9 million (P.L. 109-13). The FY2006 DOD Appropriations Act provided $50 billion as a "bridge" appropriation in anticipation of a FY2006 supplemental appropriation request expected in early 2006. DOD has estimated that the combined military operations in both Iraq and Afghanistan are costing between $5-$6 billion a month.[24] (For a detailed discussion, see CRS Report RL33110, *The Cost of Iraq, Afghanistan and Enhanced Base Security Since 9/11*, by Amy Belasco.)

Prior to the war, a number of cost estimates were put forward. Michael O'Hanlon of the Brookings Institution pegged a 250,000-strong invasion at between $40-$50 billion, with a follow-up occupation costing $10-$20 billion a year. Former

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[22] "War Could Cost More Than $40 billion," *Knight-Ridder Wire Service,* Sept. 18, 2002; "Iraq War Costs Could Soar, Pentagon Says," *Los Angeles Times,* Feb. 26, 2003.

[23] U.S. Office of Management and Budget, Press Release No. 2003-6, Mar. 25, 2002.

[24] Edmund Andrews, "White House Weigh Price Tag on Emergency Request for Iraq," *New York Times*, Oct. 27, 2004.

White House economic advisor Lawrence Lindsay estimated the high limit on the cost to be 1%-2% of GNP, or about $100-$200 billion. Mitch Daniels, Director of the Office of Management and Budget, subsequently discounted this estimate as "very, very high," and stated that the costs would be between $50-$60 billion, though no specific supporting figures were provided for the estimate.[25]

In a March 2003 cost estimate, prior to the onset of the war, the Congressional Budget Office put deployment costs at about $14 billion, with combat operations costing $10 billion for the first month and $8 billion a month thereafter. CBO cited the cost of returning combat forces to home bases at $9 billion, and the costs of continued occupation of Iraq to run between $1-$4 billion.[26] On October 28, 2003, CBO issued a letter report to Representative Spratt, ranking member of the House Budget Committee, estimating the cost of four scenarios for the Iraq occupation. Positing different troop levels, rates of withdrawal, and durations of the occupation, the cost estimates ranged from $85 to $200 billion during the 2005-2013 time frame. These estimates did not include funding for reconstruction or classified activities[27]

The American Academy of Arts and Sciences published a much more wide-ranging report which covered the possibility of an extended occupation, in addition to potential long-term economic consequences and concludes that potential costs could range from $99 billion to $1.2 trillion.[28] For comparison, the cost to the United States of the Persian Gulf War in 1990-1991 was approximately $60 billion, and almost all of this cost was offset by international financial contributions.[29]

Other Congressional Action

Reflecting growing congressional concern over the conduct and duration of the war in Iraq, the FY2006 DOD Authorization Act (P.L. 109-63, Section 1222) requires the Secretary of Defense, in conjunction with the Central Intelligence Agency, to provide quarterly briefings to the Armed Services, Appropriations, and Intelligence Committees of both chambers on the strategy for the war. These briefings are to be provided at the same time that the previously mandated written reports on stability and security in Iraq are submitted.[30]

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[25] Elisabeth Bumiller, "Budget Director Lowers Estimate of Cost of War," *New York Times,* Dec. 31, 2002, p. 1.

[26] Congressional Budget Office. *An Analysis of the President's Budgetary Proposals for Fiscal Year 2004: An Interim Report.* March 2003

[27] *Inside Defense.Com*, Nov. 3, 2003. p. 1.

[28] *War with Iraq: Costs, Consequences, and Alternatives,* American Academy of Arts and Sciences, Dec. 2002, [http://www.amacad.org/publications/monographs/War_with_ Iraq.pdf].

[29] *Persian Gulf War: U.S. Costs and Allied Financial Contributions,* CRS Issue Brief IB91019, Sept. 1992. (Out of print. For copies, contact Steven Bowman 202-707-7613.)

[30] The written reports were mandated by the Explanatory Statement of the Committee on Conference on the FY2005 Emergency Supplemental Appropriation (H.Rept. 109-72)

The FY2006 DOD Authorization Act (Sec.1227) also established a detailed quarterly report requirement on "U.S. Policy and Military Operations in Iraq." The report is to be unclassified "to the maximum extent possible," with a classified annex if necessary. Among the data to be provided in the report are the following items:

- Current military mission and the diplomatic, political, economic, and military measures undertaken to achieve it, including:
  Engaging the international community in stabilization efforts
  Strengthening Iraqi government ministries
  Training Iraqi Security Forces and transferring responsibility
- The number of Iraqi armed forces, police, and special unit battalions that must be able to operate independently or "take the lead" in counterinsurgency operations.
- The ability of Iraqi government ministries and local governments to support and sustain security forces.
- A plan to achieve full Iraqi Security Force independent capability, criteria to evaluate progress, and potentially disruptive variables.

Additional Reading

CRS Report RL31763, *Iraq: Summary of U.S. Forces*, by Linwood B. Carter.

CRS Report RL31339, *Iraq: U.S. Regime Change Efforts and Post-War Governance*, by Kenneth Katzman.

CRS Report RL31871, *Post-War Iraq: Potential Issues Raised by Previous Occupation and Peacekeeping Experiences*, by Nina M. Serafino.

CRS Report RS21404, *U.S. Occupation of Iraq? Issues Raised by Experiences in Japan and Germany*, by Nina M. Serafino.